

to all. Perhaps Simon had beheld her on the street, as the woman described by Solomon in Prov. 7, enticing young men into sin. And now behold she, polluted with sin, comes to Jesus with such manifestations of love, affection and humility; and Christ heeds her not. A Pharisee would have spurned her away with the fear of being polluted with her touch, but Christ permits all her actions. Accordingly, Simon desirous of finding some fault with his guest, at once arrives at the conclusion, that Jesus is not the great prophet or the Christ some people were claiming him to be. For he says within himself, "This man, if he were a prophet would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him; for she is a sinner." He realized that, if Jesus was a prophet or the Christ, he must possess supernatural powers. With this thought before him, he supposed that although the woman stood behind him, Jesus could, without turning around to look at her, tell who and what manner of woman she was. He would expect a prophet to bid her depart, realizing that she was a sinner, though not one would tell him. And as Jesus did not seem to manifest this knowledge, Simon doubted that he was either a prophet or the Christ. But, Simon you are mistaken. It is Jesus that knows the woman and you that is not acquainted with her. Jesus knows whether she is a sinner. He knows what she has done in the past. He knows what she is doing now. He knows what is in her mind and heart. He understands what prompted her to do these things, and the motive with which she did them. He knows all. He knows Simon too. He understands the evil thoughts that are now arising in his mind, and at once presents to him the parable of the two creditors. When asked which of the two had the greatest love, not knowing just what to say, and not wishing to condemn himself, Simon rather unconcernedly replies; "I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most." Ah! Simon. You have testified against yourself. While trying to prove the innocent to be guilty, you have condemned yourself. Jesus answers him, "Thou hast rightly judged, seest thou this woman." Jesus makes the application.

The parable readily applies to the circumstances at hand. Simon failed to reverence Jesus with the common courtesies, but this woman who had been such a great sinner revered him with the greatest acts of humility and love. She had a great debt to pay and had not the wherewith to pay it. She could not make right the many evil deeds of her past life. She could not restore the many souls she

had dragged down to ruin. Realizing her weakness and inability to make restitution for her wrongs, she now, with a sorrowful heart humbly at the feet of Jesus seeks pardon for them all. He says to the woman "Thy sins are forgiven." So it is with us all. We have a great debt to pay and have nothing with which to pay it. But if we humbly and sincerely come to Jesus, confess our debt of sin and ask his forgiveness, promising at the same time to strive ever to walk free from this debt thereafter, he will "frankly forgive us all."

This, then leads us to the subject of "The forgiveness of sins," which we shall consider under two heads: First, the one to be forgiven. Second, the one who forgives. Under the first head we shall consider sin—what it is, its evil results, etc. For a definition of sin let us turn to I John 3:4 where he says, "Sin is the transgression of the law." God has given us a divine law which we must obey if we desire salvation and eternal life. This law is not one that is difficult to obey. It does not request us to do things that are impossible for us to do. It is a just, pure and perfect law. David says, "The law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure enlightening the eyes." The way to heaven is not a steep, rough, rugged road,—one that is hard to travel and so narrow that we can scarcely walk therein. It is only that straight and narrow way in which we travel on to glory. It is the way of wisdom, whose "ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace." It is the road of sin that is rough, rugged and hard to travel. True, it is inclined downward and it does not require extra exertion to walk therein; but it is filled with trouble and sorrow all the way.

You think the Christian's path is steep,
A rugged road and hard to keep,
A straight and narrow way;
But there is still a harder lot
For you who have your God forgot,
And make no Christ your stay.

Yes, the requirements of sin are much more grievous than the requirements of righteousness. Christ says, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light;" and again "if you love me keep my commandments." With the yoke rightly adjusted it is easy to bear, and with the love of Christ his commandments are easy to obey. So, we have a law which is easy to obey, but if we disobey it, we sin. In I John 5:17 this definition is made still stronger where the writer says, "All unrighteousness is sin."

Some things may appear harmless, but

if there is no good to be derived therefrom it is sin. "He that is not with me is against me." So we might say that which is not a benefit to the cause of Christ is a detriment. When contemplating doing certain things which we doubt whether we should do or not, we too often stop and only consider whether it would be wrong instead of considering whether it would be right, and bring forth good. The first we should do, but not neglect the latter. To accomplish good we should be foremost in our minds. Whatsoever we do, should all be done to the honor and glory of God. And, what we do should be done in faith, for Paul tells that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

Sin is selfishness. The wise man tells us that, "through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddeth with all wisdom." Man through his own selfish and worldly desires voluntarily separates himself from God and begins to seek and meddle with the wisdom of this world. He fails to see the beauties of righteousness; and, deeming the tasks too great he, through the evil temptations that Satan has thrown in his way, his evil desires and lusts, withdraws himself from God. He is selfish. He wants everything his way. He seems to think that, if he only had the authority he could establish a better code of laws and requirements than God has, when he, with his finite mind, is not able to govern himself. Such vain and selfish conclusions brings about very evil results. They get the sinner farther and farther from God, from heaven, and from glory. Every step taken in the road of sin makes it more difficult to get back into the right way. Solomon has said, "The way of the transgressor is hard." And again, "The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just." The sin of the wicked continually brings them trouble. Though they may seem to prosper for awhile, yet their sin will overtake them some time. For, "Be sure your sin will find you out."

This punishment is brought about by the sinner himself. It is not God that directly punishes, but the sinner punishes himself. God has fixed the penalty for disobedience, has warned us thereof, has told us the danger of sinning, and if we, regardless of his entreaty to do right and his warning against the danger of wrong doing, rush headlong into sin, we punish ourselves. If we in choosing between two roads, the one being a rocky, miry road, full of briars and thorns at the end of which is located a deep and awful pit, into which they fall that travel that road; and the other a beautiful, straight,